



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **HOLLISTER MAN SENTENCED TO 30 YEARS FOR METH CONSPIRACY**

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Hollister, Mo., man was sentenced in federal court today for his role in a methamphetamine conspiracy. He is the fourth and final defendant to be sentenced in the conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine in southwest Missouri.

**Alonzo F. Ellerman**, 42, of Hollister, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Richard E. Dorr this morning to 30 years in federal prison without parole.

**Ellerman** was convicted by a federal jury on Nov. 5, 2003. **Ellerman** was found guilty of conspiracy to distribute 500 grams or more of methamphetamine from April 1998 to July 29, 2002, in Taney County, Mo. He also was found guilty of being a felon in possession of several firearms. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Ellerman** was found guilty of being in possession of six firearms on Jan. 18, 2002. He has two 1982 criminal felony convictions for assault and burglary.

**Ellerman** was sentenced today to 30 years in prison on the conspiracy conviction, and 10 years in prison on the firearms conviction. The court ordered those sentences to run concurrently.

\* **Michael R. Burns**, 55, of Branson, Mo., was sentenced on Feb. 19, 2004, to 30 years in federal prison without parole. The court also ordered **Burns** to pay a \$4,442.76 fine. On Oct. 30, 2003, **Burns** was convicted by a federal jury of all three counts of a federal indictment charging him with an involvement in the methamphetamine conspiracy. **Burns** was found guilty of conspiracy to distribute 500 grams or more of methamphetamine between April 1998 and July 29, 2002, in Taney County, Mo. He also was found guilty of two counts of distributing 50 grams or more of methamphetamine on June 7 and 25, 2002.

\* **Sean L. Davis**, 28, Branson, Mo., was sentenced on Dec. 17, 2003, to 10 years in

federal prison without parole. On Sept. 15, 2003, **Davis** pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute 500 grams or more of methamphetamine. By pleading guilty, Graves said, **Davis** admitted that he received supplies of methamphetamine from a co-defendant, which he redistributed to others in southwest Missouri.

\* **Howard A. Neustel**, 33, of Kirbyville, Mo., was sentenced on Nov. 10, 2003, to four years and nine months in federal prison without parole. On June 4, 2003, **Neustel** pleaded guilty to his role in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine. By pleading guilty, Graves said, **Neustel** admitted that he received supplies of methamphetamine from a co-defendant, which were redistributed to others in southwest Missouri.

The four co-defendants were charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Springfield on Jan. 23, 2003.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Robyn McKee and Randy Eggert and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Kimberly Weber-Dean. The case was investigated by COMET (the Combined Ozarks Multi-jurisdictional Enforcement Team) and the Branson, Mo., Police Department, with assistance from the sheriff's departments of Taney County and Greene County, Mo., and San Bernardino, Calif., the Santa Barbara Drug Task Force and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at  
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